Christian Toleration:

A SERMON

BEFORE THE

NEW-YORK AUXILIARY TO THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL SOCIETY

FOR THE

PROMOTION OF EVANGELICAL KNOWLEDGE.

BY JOHN S. STONE, D. D.

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NEW-YORK:
PRINTED FOR THE SOCIETY BY
STANFORD AND SWORDS, 137, BROADWAY.

1849.

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SERMON.

GALATIANS ii. 5.

To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you.

WHEN St. Paul proposed that the pious Timothy should accompany him on his mission through Lystra and Iconium,* he "took and *circumcised* him." The reason assigned was; that the Jews in those quarters were all acquainted with the semi-pagan extraction of Timothy; his mother being a Christian Jewess, while his father was a Greek: a circumstance, which, unless he were made a Jew by circumcision, would prejudice them against him, and thus keep them from listening kindly to the Gospel, which he preached. Although, therefore, circumcision had become as much a matter of indifference as Pagan extraction, yet, the Apostle hesitated not to apply the rite to Timothy, in order that he might thus gain a readier entrance for the Gospel into the hearts of his prejudiced countrymen. His act, as here mentioned, was an illustration of his

* Acts xvi. 13.

words elsewhere recorded; "Unto the Jews, I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews."—"I am made all things to all men, that I might, by all means, save some."*

But, how differently, did St. Paul act on another occasion, in reference to this same matter!† While he was at Antioch, "certain men came down from Judea, and taught the brethren, that, except they were circumcised, after the manner of Moses, they *could not be saved.*" What was the consequence?—"After no small disputation," Paul and Barnabas must needs "go up to Jerusalem," and call together all the Apostles and Elders on this question: and, after long consultation under divine teaching, must be sent back to Antioch with the solemn decision of the assembly, under the seal of the Holy Spirit, and accompanied by the declaration, that, to teach, as doctrine, the necessity of circumcision, was to "trouble" the brethren "with words, and to subvert their souls."

Now, here were two opposite courses, pursued by the same Apostle in relation to the same matter. What was the reason for such different treatment of one and the same subject? It was this:—In the one case, he yielded to good sense on a point of indifference, that he might gain an entrance for the truth into the hearts of his countrymen: in the other, he stood up against false teaching on the greatest question that can be asked. When the question was one of *expediency*—"Shall Timothy be circumcised in order to win the Jews to Christ?" he assented. But, when the question was one of *doctrine*—'Is Circumcision

* 1 Cor. ix. 20, 22. † Acts xv. 1—31.

necessary to Salvation?' he resisted; and all the other Apostles resisted with him; and mighty discussions agitated the Church, until all doubt on that point, that essential to the faith, was, at once and for ever, set at rest. There was all the difference in the world between the two cases. Better cut off a right hand, than spare ourselves in a matter of indifference, when that tenderness to ourselves must keep our fellow creatures from Christ. Better go to the stake than suffer that same matter of indifference to be enforced, when it comes to be taught as doctrine, an essential of the faith, a requisite to salvation. The former would keep men in ignorance of the true Gospel: the latter would beguile them into a subversion of that Gospel. It would be to administer a poison falsehood under the name of saving truth.

Upon this latter ground St. Paul acted, on still another occasion, in reference to *Titus*, a Greek both by father and by mother. This case is presented in connexion with the text. "False brethren, unawares brought in," had sought to "spy out the liberty which" the Galatians "had in Christ Jesus;" their freedom from the burdensome yoke of ceremonies. Their object in this system of espionage was, "that they might bring" the disciples "into bondage"—that they might enslave them to an obsolete ritual, as something necessary to salvation. To these, says the Apostle, "we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you." Those "false brethren" taught false doctrine. In this the Apostle would not tolerate them a moment. Under *such* circumstances, Titus should *not* be circumcised. Both argument and action should stand

up in stiff opposition to false teaching. Superseded non-essentials—the worn-out dress of religion, were matters of small moment, and might, for that time, be put on or left off; according as the one course, or the other, would contribute to the reception and efficacy of the Gospel. But, permanent *Essentials*—the living soul of the Faith, were things of infinite concern, and might *never* be left without earnest defence and honest adoption: for they were "the sword of the Spirit" in slaying the sins of men—the seeds of salvation, by which the Holy Ghost begets the new life of the soul.

The reason, why the Apostle thus resisted false teaching, is given in the text. He resisted it, in order "that the truth of the Gospel might *continue*" with the Galatians. This phrase, 'the truth of the Gospel,' is a Hebræism; it means simply—'*the true Gospel.*' It was necessary that the true Gospel should *continue* with the Galatians; just as necessary as that it should at first have been *given*. Of what use is it to give a hungry man food, if he carelessly suffer it to be stolen? And what accelerated mischief is wrought, if, instead of the wholesome food, which is removed, a subtilly poisoned loaf is left! Better give no food, than suffer it to be thus exchanged. Food is good; and the natural desire for it leads to the readier taking of the disguised poison; and thus to the speedier and more dreadful death! This latter illustration shows that it was even more necessary that 'the true Gospel should continue' with the Galatians, than that it should at first have been given: for its place was to be supplied with a dangerously poisoned counterfeit; and, in their natural desire for some religion, they would the more

readily receive a false one, and trust in it the more confidingly to their unspeakably aggravated ruin.

The truths thus exhibited, are as important in our day as they were in those of the Apostle. The same reason exists, in our case as in his, why we should not, for a moment, 'give place by subjection' to any system of false teaching; especially when that system involves the vital verities of the Gospel. If it be our blessed privilege that we have the true Gospel, it is also our bounden duty, and we cannot possibly overrate the solemnity of the bond, to stand up, both by argument and by act, in its defence, and for its transmission, uncorrupt, to our children and our children's children. Better not have received this Gospel at all, than now to receive and transmit, in its stead, a fatally deceptive counterfeit.

It is needless to say, that, in our day, as well as in that of St. Paul, false teachers exist. Some of them, too, seek to 'bring us into bondage,' if not under the same, yet under almost as burdensome, a round of ceremonies, as those, which, in his time, had just given place to 'the liberty that is in Christ Jesus:' and their view of the necessity and efficacy of these ceremonies to salvation is quite as much a subversion of the true Gospel, as were the views of earlier false teachers touching circumcision and the other observances of the law. To these views, therefore, we feel bound to "give place by subjection, no, not for an hour." We *profess* no inspiration: but we *possess* an inspiration which is ample. We are not Apostles. But we have the inspired writings of the Apostles. By these writings we are bound to govern our faith. And, governing ourselves thus, we must take our stand against

doctrines, open to the very condemnation, which St. Paul pronounced on what he called—'*Another* Gospel; which is *not* another;' being, in truth, *no* Gospel, but a system, by which false teachers sought to '*pervert* the Gospel of Christ.' 'That the true Gospel may continue with us,' we are bound to make the conservation of its doctrines one of the chief labors of our Christian, and more especially of our ministerial life.

I. A brief reference to the principal modes of perpetuating the Gospel, from the earliest times, may be allowed to introduce what I have to say of our own labors in this cause.

At first, those modes were—*the word of mouth and handwriting;* oral instruction and written teaching. The latter, indeed, was a slow process. In correctly transcribing the sacred writings, or any other extended work, the readiest scribe was obliged to spend a long time, and to purchase a whole manuscript Bible would have cost a common man the avails of his labor for long years. Nevertheless, while inspiration lasted, although one of these modes of teaching was slow, yet both were sure. Inspiration, indeed, did not and could not keep false teaching out of the Church; but it could and did continue the true Gospel. The voice of the living apostle sounded that Gospel to the living, and his writings embalmed it for the unborn. His unerring rebuke condemned the false teacher, and his unerring pen recorded both the rebuke itself and the false teaching condemned.

Hence it happened, that, even after inspiration ceased, both oral and written instruction were sufficiently sure modes of continuing the true Gospel, so long as its teachers were truly converted men,—men

truly taught of the Spirit,—men, who humbly and prayerfully studied, and obediently and closely followed, the Written Word of Inspiration. Thenceforward, this Word became to all succeeding generations, the all-sufficient, and the only imperishable embalming of the mind of Christ. The inspired teacher's living voice died with him; but his writings stereotyped the mind of God to all posterity.

Hence it happened again, that when men, *untaught* of the Spirit, presumed to teach in Christ's name, and especially when the authority of the human teacher began to be more regarded than that of the Inspired Record, an indefinite and uncertain ***Tradition*** gradually arose: and the teaching of the Church began, by degrees, to corrupt the Gospel of Christ. The sacred Scriptures fell more and more out of sight; and ecclesiastical authority became increasingly active in enforcing ecclesiastical traditions. Even under the slow process of handwriting, books eventually became numerous; and, what is worthy of observation, were far from being in uniform accordance with the traditionary standards. Both Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy found their respective advocates; and hence the authority of the Church had increasing employment in its attempt to enforce uniformity of opinion by its proscription both of Heretics and of their Heresies.

In this attempt,—the history of which runs through centuries,—had the Church been as Evangelical in her faith, as she claimed to be Infallible in her decisions, she would have had a show of reason on her side. But, it is remarkable, that, while she was growing severe in her Indexes,—prohibitory and expurgatory,—and while both the books and the bodies of the so

called heretics were more and more frequently committed to the flames,—she had herself grown corrupt both in faith and in practice. The consequence was, that both the authors who were condemned, and the doctrines which they taught, were often more Scriptural than their persecutors: and that what claimed the name of an effort to perpetuate the True Gospel was really a work by which that Gospel was either thoroughly corrupted, or practically hidden from knowledge.

The slow passing of those long ages of darkness at length brought on one of the greatest eras that have ever marked the history of the world,—that of the invention of *the art of printing*. Books, orthodox and heterodox, now became greatly multiplied. Copies of the Bible in particular were scattered through society in a before unknown abundance. Persecution for opinion's sake became proportionally intense. The Inquisition of former centuries awoke into unwonted activity, and the Indexes of the Church grew cumbrous with the names of authors and of books condemned either to the flames or to expurgation.

Soon, however, another great era dawned. The *Reformation* burst on the Church. The spirit of inquiry broke all bonds. Though the prisons of the Inquisition groaned with victims, and flames and Autos da Fe sent myriads of books and their readers out of the world, yet it was all in vain. Vast territories of the Church emerged from darkness, and light for all future ages shone.

The change, wrought by the two events last noticed, in the modes of continuing the Gospel, is obvious. It was a change from writing to PRINTING; and from

reading by the comparatively FEW to reading by the COUNTLESS MULTITUDE. The Gospel, so long continued by oral and by WRITTEN speech, is now continued by oral and by PRINTED speech, by the PULPIT and by the PRESS. And, as in the earlier, so in the latter period, the modes in which the true Gospel is continued, are those also by which it is corrupted. As at present used, the pulpit reaches many, the press reaches more, and both, together with immense good, do much evil. Moreover, the change from writing to printing, and from reading by the few to reading by the many, is marked by this strong circumstance; that, within the circle by which Providence has thus far bounded the Protestant Reformation, it is no longer practicable even to attempt an enforcement of uniformity in opinion. Instruments for such an attempt have become powerless, and the attempt itself would die in its very inception. This feature in the change which has been wrought, gives an importance to the printing art which cannot be over estimated. In a world, where thought is unbound, and inquiry unrestricted, the press becomes, perhaps, the most important of human agencies for good or for evil. We can neither resist nor disregard its action. We cannot tie up men's purses that they shall not buy, nor seal up their eyes, that they shall not read, nor shut up their spirit of inquiry, that they shall not investigate. The world has gone to reading, and read they will, for weal or for woe. Society is flooded with books. The knowledge of good and of evil has become *a sea*, and the million are voyaging across it towards either safety or shipwreck. We cannot dry up the flood, and we ought not to make the attempt. This sea is GOD'S, as truly as the 'great

waters,' or the sea of life, or the stream of history. Why books are ever suffered to be bad, we may not know; but that this flooding of the world with books is of God's ordering we may not doubt. Has His hand been in all the other great events and movements of the world; and is it not in this, the greatest of them all? It were impiety to deny it. He has poured this flood of knowledge over the earth, and we cannot dry it up, any more than we can dry up the Atlantic while He continues to give his rain; any more than we can dry up the sea of life while He continues to give men breath. Nor ought we to make the attempt even for so high an object, as that of giving Truth a safe passage through the world. Who would wish to dry up the 'great deep,' in order to render the passage to Europe safe, because it occasionally shipwrecks the mariner? Who would take away the atmosphere from men, because it is often loaded with deadly impurities? Individuals may read bad books and be ruined; but why need we fear for the safety of the true Gospel in a reading world? Is not the sea, on which it is launched, God's, and will He not keep His own Gospel safe on its passage? Did He not of old launch the Ark upon the Deluge; and did He not keep it safe until it rested on Ararat?

While, however, we need not fear for the ultimate safety of the true Gospel in a reading world, we may well take heed to the perils in which its individual readers are set. They are readers of numerous other books, and whether they shall read the good or the bad is a question, the decision of which, although power cannot control, yet prudence may influence. Though it were foolish to wish to dry up the Atlantic,

yet it were wise to make the navigation of it as safe as we can. Though it would be death to deprive men of the atmosphere, yet it would be life to deprive the atmosphere of its impurities. Though it would be foolhardy in us to attempt an 'Index prohibitorum,' or an official 'Imprimatur,' yet it would be Christian prudence to make the press labor prolifically with 'the true Gospel,' and with books conservative of its truth. God has broken the rack and put out the flame, that they may no more tear the sinews and boil the blood of the persecuted: but in working, by himself, this glorious result, He has bound us to the equally glorious co-labor of using a sanctified reason to illuminate the understandings, and to irradiate the hearts of men with 'the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.' He, whose sovereign voice has bid us leave men's judgments free, has, at the same time, clothed us with the right, and bound on us the duty of furnishing them with all possible light from him who is 'the Truth,' and of persuading them, by all proper means, to 'walk in the light' thus furnished. By an evangelical pulpit we may do much in this heavenly labor: by an evangelical press we may, perhaps, do more. At all events, it is certain that, as Christians, we may neither abuse nor neglect the Press, any more than we may the Pulpit. Of such abuse or neglect we cannot be guilty but at the peril of our own souls and of the souls of others. We are responsible to God for the improvement of our talents. We ought, therefore, never to forget that these talents consist, not only of those means of influence, which are forced into our possession, but also of those, upon which wisely directed effort will enable us to lay our hands.

II. But it is time to advance to another view of the subject. I have already adverted to the necessity that 'the true Gospel should continue' with those who have received it. The certainty that, in the world, it will continue, I have also shown to be compatible with the possibility that, to individuals, it may be lost. I have, moreover, remarked that in our day, as well as in that of the apostle, there are false teachers in the world; and that, therefore, the most binding of duties rests upon us to do what we can to prevent this individual loss of the true Gospel. Our children want it, and their children will want it, as much as ourselves. Better for posterity that we had never received the true Gospel, than that we should now receive and transmit in its stead 'another Gospel, which is *not* another,' but a '*perversion* of the Gospel of Christ.' I say, better for *posterity*; because the credit of the true Gospel, which we have received, would be transferred to the false one, which we transmitted, and thus give the falsehood of the latter the greater currency, and the more fatal influence.

To bring the subject still nearer,—there is false teaching in our *own Church*. If 'we have rightly learned Christ,' the true Gospel is in danger of being lost to our children, and our children's children. *This we believe in the depth of our souls' honesty.* In relation to those ordinances, which have taken the place among us of the ancient circumcision and Passover, and to ceremonies, which, if not identical, are yet all but equally cumbrous, with those of the Levitical Law, there is in our Church a great amount of teaching,—an insisting on the marvelous efficacy, and on the virtual necessity of these externals of religion,

which, as we are constrained to understand things, is quite as much a perversion of the Gospel of Christ as the teaching which St. Paul so strenuously opposed in his epistle to the Galatians. If he could now appear in the resumed exercise of his divinely inspired ministry, we cannot doubt that he would set himself against these errors as vigorously, as solemnly, and as authoritatively as he did against those which actually incurred his apostolic censure.

A detailed notice of these errors would be incompatible with the object of this discourse. I must presume on the *intelligence* of my audience so far as to suppose that they are acquainted with the system of doctrinal teaching to which I refer, and on their *soundness*, so far as to take it for granted that they sympathize with the feeling expressed, touching the perils of that system. Assuming these points, then, I advance in the general subject.

Those who teach what we solemnly believe to be 'another Gospel' than that of Christ, are exceedingly numerous, both in our mother-land and in our own. They have surrounded themselves with a vast power of influence. Individual and organized action, in the use both of the pulpit and of the press, is most efficiently under their control. The press, especially, is made, in their hands, to wield all the influence of which it is so capable. They use the press as the agent both of individual and of organized enterprize. They use it in speaking to the little Sunday scholar, to the cursory tract-reader, and to the careful book-student. They make the press speak their mind in every possible way and to every possible class of readers. From the lightest picture book and the most attractive fiction,

to the gravest history and the most profound treatise, there is no department of literature which they have not filled with their teaching, and through which they are not helping to mould the mind of the present and of coming generations. In some of their books, doctrines which we hold dear as the life of the soul, are treated with levity, and those who hold them, with obloquy. In others, views, which we regard as subversive of the Gospel, are presented under all the facinations of poetry, and of that venerableness which appeals to so strong a sentiment within us, while they who hold these views, are exhibited under all the imposing attractions of saintly eminence and of intellectual superiority. They make ART, too, subserve the power of the press with some of her most beautiful resources; with whatever can minister to weak credulity and inborn superstition, no less than with all that can gratify a refined taste and a cultivated imagination.

Under such circumstances, then, and amid such perils to the cause of Evangelical Truth, what is the duty of those to whom this cause is dearer than life, and to whom, as we conceive, this cause is here entrusted? Obviously, that duty is, so far as an effective use of the press is concerned, that we should do what we see others so diligently doing. We must use THE PRESS with all the skill and power with which it can possibly be made to speak, in the service of 'the true Gospel.' We are shut up to this course. As we understand duty, God has bound our hand to this work, and from this work we may not take off our hand.

But, such a use of the press, it is manifest, requires

the power either of private capital, or of public organization. The former we have not adequately at command—the latter, therefore, is all that remains. Hence, we have not scrupled to attempt its use. For more than a year, our 'Protestant Episcopal Society for the Promotion of Evangelical Knowledge' has been in existence, and was organized for the express purpose of making a right use of the religious press. By the blessing of God on this organization, and so far as its action can be made to reach, we desire and design to secure to our children and our children's children, the 'continuance of the true Gospel.'

Having thus put our hand to the plough, it behoves us to look straight forwards, and to give ourselves to the work with abounding diligence and self-sacrifice. This we esteem our high mission to the Church. The pulpit we do not undervalue—it is God's great ordinance for the diffusion among the living of the true Gospel of life. But, without the press, as now used, the pulpit itself is robbed of half its power. Through the press, the pulpit can speak, not only to countless multitudes of the living, but also to more countless multitudes of the unborn: while, even among the living, the press can be made to speak to thousands, whose ears the pulpit might never have reached. In many cases, too, the press may win the attention of those who have long listened to the voice of the pulpit with unheeding ears. We lay our hand on the press, then, not that it may supersede, but that it may support the pulpit. We would do our part in making the press, in common with every other means, whether divinely ordained, or providentially originated, contribute through all its marvelous capabilities, towards that grand result—the continuance of 'true Gospel' with

all whom we may be permitted to reach with our influence.

III. Here, however, we come in sight of a point in the subject, which, at this period of our labors, is of the utmost importance; showing that, so far as we are concerned, our subject is truly THE topic for the times. OUR SOCIETY MEETS WITH OPPOSITION; its mode of action is assailed with objections: and if that opposition be just, and these objections well-founded, then, important as are all the remarks which have been offered, it behoves us to pause where we are, and, instead of advancing, to retreat upon more tenable ground.

The *form* of the objections with which we meet is immaterial; the *substance* of them amounts to this; that the grant of authority from the Church is, in some shape, necessary in any organization for the religious use of the Press; that our society is voluntary and irresponsible; and that it tends to division, or schism in the Church. Upon these points of objection against our organization let us now bestow a few moments' attention.

I. IS AUTHORITY FROM THE CHURCH, then, necessary in an organization for the religious use of the press? This seems like saying, in other words, that the Church herself, in some of her organized forms, would be a proper body for such a use of the press. If her authority be necessary in any such subordinate organization, it would surely be proper for her to engage directly in the work, which such an organization contemplates. But, if this be true, why has our Church never, in any of her organized capacities—General Convention, Diocesan Conventions, or vestries—engaged in the work? Why has it never been possible

to persuade her, in any of these capacities, to assume the responsibility of furnishing a religious literature for all her members? To these questions various answers may be given; all including valid reasons for the course indicated. But all answers will be found to run back, ultimately, into one all-comprehending reply:—because our Church, as a reformed Protestant branch of the Church Universal, has formally renounced, in all its shapes, the Romish claim to INFALLIBILITY. If our Church were infallible, she would be a proper body for the use of the religious press. But, as she is not infallible, as she lays no claim to infallibility, as she expressly renounces all such claims, she is not a proper body for such a work; because such a work would involve her executive, her judicial, or her deliberative functions in the renewed violence of punitive discipline, in the endless disputes of theological controversy, or in the absurd position of an authoritative body, which attempts what it cannot execute. Hence, she makes no attempt of the kind. She knows there is no Inquisition here, and none to build one at her command; she feels that her anathema, if loud enough to be heard, would but raise a smile; and she foresees that if her deliberative assemblies were to enlist in controversy, a hundred free pens and freer tongues would at once leap into activity, under the consciousness that, in the race of argument, they could run as logically and as winningly as she.

But if, for these reasons, the Church herself be not a proper body for the use of the religious press, certainly her authority cannot be necessary to the action of any other organization for that purpose. Why should she attempt to do indirectly what she cannot

and must not directly undertake? This would be a violation of one of the commonest maxims of the law.

An *individual* may use the press and his own personal influence in determining what religious books certain other individuals will read. Any *number* of individuals may separately use the same means to the same end. With a view, therefore, to the larger control of means, and to the greater effect of their influence, any number may ORGANIZE for the same purpose. For, if the principle on which our Church has planted herself—the abnegation of the claim to infallibility—will not allow her authoritively to interfere with the one degree of influence, which an individual exerts in publishing and circulating religious books, the same principle will not allow her so to interfere with the ten or ten thousand degrees of influence which a society would exert in the same line. In teaching, her direct authority is limited to the fixing of her standards of faith and worship. Unauthoritatively,—by her thousand forms of influence, addressed to the reason and the feelings of her members,—she can indirectly exert a vast moral power in determining what religious books they will read. But, authoritatively, by any system of force or of censure, she cannot interfere in directly deciding what religigus books they either shall or shall not read; whether those books be published by an individual, or by a Society.

2. That her authority is not necessary, nor even proper, to the operations of a Society for the use of the religious press will still further appear from our answer to another and closely connected form of the objection with which we are met.

It is said, our Society is VOLUNTARY and IRRESPONSIBLE. This means that, if it publish heresy, it is

amenable to no authority. But, we reply, let it publish heresy, and see what would follow. Although a Society, like a corporation, has no soul, and cannot, as a Society, be excommunicated, yet its heretics and their books would be as amenable to the authority of the Church as if they had acted in their individual capacity, and the Society who patronized them would fall more effectually than if laid under official interdict. If, however, a Society publish only what others are pleased to CALL heresy, then let the accusors fairly demonstrate the heresy, and they would insure the same practical result. Our Church has her STANDARDS; and, though self-divested of the claim to infallibility, yet she is not thereby left a powerless thing, without the means of protecting herself from those of her members, who plainly violate her faith. As to teachings that amount not to demonstrable heresy, all that need be said of the issues of our Society is, that they must receive the same treatment with the works of an individual author. They must abide the test of time, under the light of the Bible, and in the hands of Christian argument and of manly criticism, and must stand or fall, as the so manifested will of God ordains. To this course our Church is fairly bound. By authority she may fix her standards; but, by authority, she may not interfere with the current theological discussions of the age. This is but saying that she ought not to *delegate* her authority to either side in those discussions. So far as such discussions imply the presence within her pale, and in certain forms, of both truth and error—she ought to allow that truth and that error to meet face to face, and to stand or fall according to the light which they invoke. In these discussions—no demonstrable heresy being involved—

to touch either individuals or Societies, with either the censuring hand or the favoring grant of AUTHORITY, would be a violation of the great principle of her Protestantism.

3. But there is still another form of the objection. Although the truth of what has been said be admitted, yet, it is urged, the authority of the Church is necessary to the operations of such a Society as ours, because the evil to which we expose the Church, is not only heresy, but also SCHISM. Our Society, being voluntary, irresponsible, and professedly opposed to an already current system of doctrine, tends to DIVISION in the Church.

This means, that if any number of members, calling themselves the Church, and acting through various human organizations, have succeeded in giving currency to a system of doctrine, which any other number of members honestly believe to be subversive of 'the true Gospel,' and if the latter venture to combine their talents and their means with the view of counteracting that system, and of securing the 'continuance of this Gospel,' they are justly chargeable with fomenting divisions, or with generating a schism in the Church. This is the true force of the objection, and must be so considered until the Church herself pronounces an authoritative decision between the two systems of doctrine involved.

No Society for the religious use of the press can be said to have the authority of the Church, unless the Church adopt all its publications into her standards of faith, or proclaim them as binding expositions of those standards. Into such an exercise of authority our Church never has ventured and never will venture. To show that neither our "General Protestant Epis-

copal Sunday School Union," nor the New-York "Protestant Episcopal Tract Society," has any more claim to be considered an authorized standard of doctrinal teaching, than our "Society for the promotion of Evangelical Knowledge"—let the attempt be made to secure the official sanction of our Church to all the doctrinal views which have been put forth by either the one or the other of those so called Church Institutions. Does any one suppose that this attempt could succeed without either bloodshed or utter dismemberment of our Church? No. Neither of those institutions, therefore, has the authority of the Church in its publications, any more than our "Society for the Promotion of Evangelical Knowledge." They have, it is true, labored to engross the INFLUENCE of the Church, or of what, with many, is equally potent—the NAME of the Church—in extending the circulation of their books, and in deepening the impression of their teachings; but, the AUTHORITY of the Church, as a guarantee of the soundness of their theology, and as a means of enforcing their teachings, they neither have obtained nor can acquire. It is *influence*, not *authority*, behind which they have entrenched themselves, within which they hope to prove irresistible, and the loss of which they so much dread. If they might monopolize the influence of the Church in the dissemination of peculiar views, they would, questionless, remain content, well knowing that, with multitudes, there is no discrimination between such influence and the voice of authority itself.

This brings us upon plain ground, and shows that, in the last form of the objection, though so gravely urged, there is a cool effrontery, at which we may well be surprised; or, to say the least, it betrays a sad

oversight of one of the fundamental principles on which our Church has taken her stand. Individuals, choosing to call themselves the Church, organize for the religious use of the press, and thus organized, have power to induce multitudes to read and believe what they publish, however subversive of 'the true Gospel' others may deem their publications. But the moment these others,—just as much the Church as they,—attempt to organize for what they consider the right religious use of the press, they are accused of fomenting divisions, or of throwing the Church into the peril of SCHISM. Without intending any offence, and merely to exhibit strikingly the true force of this point in the objection, let us take an illustration or two.

A caravan is journeying across the Wilderness.—A large and influential portion of its members attempt to lead the remainder from the customary route, through a region where the latter believe they will certainly fall into deadly peril. So long as no resistance to the attempt is offered, no disturbance ensues; but let that remainder determine to follow the old, well-known, long-tried path, and, for this purpose, let them band together, and thus give efficiency to their determination, then, what division follows,—what schismatics these organizers become!

Three brothers affix some additional clauses to their father's will, and attempt to convince the rest of the family that these additions are parts of the original, and were intended to secure the readier and more effectual settlement of the estate. So long as these latter acquiesce, all is harmony and brotherly love; but let them become honestly and reasonably convinced that the clauses, instead of being original, are

additions, and that instead of ensuring, they jeopard the claim of the entire family to the inheritance, and, in this conviction, let them agree to stand by each other in opposing those additions, and insisting simply on the original terms of the will, then, wicked ones, what disturbers of family peace they become,—what violators of household union!

Treated in this way, our Society may be followed by division; but who will be the real authors of the schism? Treated with due courtesy, our Society may even produce earnest discussion; but it need work no separation. On the contrary, our whole ecclesiastical caravan may, peradventure, be persuaded to keep the old track: our entire Church family may be induced to cleave singly to the Bible, our common Father's will.

4. But there is another way of answering all the objections which are urged against our Society. As they operate on most minds, the practical force of these objections resides in the idea, which, without much reflection, they adopt,—that our mode of action is not a CHURCH mode; that our action is not CHURCH action; but something independent of the Church—ontside the Church, and opposed to the Church.

This idea we hold to be BASELESS. Our action is Church action. In a good sense, it is action in the Church, by the Church, and for the Church. Let us illustrate this point by looking at some other Body.

Look at the STATE. Whenever this body is named, the habits of some minds lead them to think simply of the Governor, the Senate and Assembly, the Judges and other functionaries, assembled in the Capitol, or in the Courts; making laws, supervising the public welfare, controlling the public works, and administer-

ing public justice. But, is there no other idea of the State? What is that great mass of individuals, of individual interests, and of individual movements, scattered over our extended territory;—our farmers, our mechanics, our manufacturers, our merchants, our professional men and our laborers;—all at work, separately and in numerous combinations; and all together making ocean, land, and the products of both teem with life and activity? Are not these, in a most important sense, the State? And is not the State in action both in its individuals and in its associations of individuals? The truth is, the State is ONE: but has two kinds of actions: individual or voluntary; and representative, or official. And why is not the former of these kinds of action sufficient? Simply because the State has some interests, in protecting and promoting which, public authority and force are requisite. If the whole body were to attempt the care of these interests, much of the great vital movements of the State must be hindered, perhaps thrown into confusion. This calls for action by REPRESENTATIVES. In theory and effect, the wisdom, authority, and force of the whole are, for certain purposes, delegated to a few, that the many may, without hindrance, give themselves to their own proper duties. But, for this very reason, representative action must be limited to those things, which cannot otherwise be done, or which, if otherwise done, could not be well done. Representative authority and action are not needed to do the work of farmers, mechanics, and merchants; or of numerous voluntary associations of each; and if the Representative, or official power should attempt either to do, or to prevent the doing of, all or any of this kind of work, it would speedily find itself in trouble quite beyond its depth.

Take a somewhat different, but equally pertinent illustration. The Governement of the United States is based on a Constitution, and entrusted with the management of certain great national interests. The doctrines of this Constitution, on some important points, are differently interpreted; and the demands of these interests, in some material respects, are differently understood. Hence, difference of political views; and hence, diversities of political organizations for the support and propagation of those views. Are these organizations irregular and unlawful? Are they independent of the nation, outside the nation, or opposed to the nation? Are they not of the nation, in the nation, and for the nation? Is not the great heart of the United States in them, beating and panting in its counsels and labors for the general weal? Do they not spring from the very genius of our Institutions; and, violent as they sometimes grow, yet, on the whole, are they not essential to the working and the perpetuation of those Institutions? If they were permanently to disappear, would it not require more unerring wisdom, and more indefectible rectitude than men ordinarily possess to preserve our Institutions pure, or to keep them from the perils of one sectionally overmastering tendency? Keep these organizations as temperate, as pure, and as wise as you can. But if, in its official capacity, the general Government should attempt to suppress one or all of them, or to favor one while denouncing the rest, should we not have quick and strong demonstration that the United States is something more than its officers, its army and navy, its forts and munitions? In the tempest raised, would not all these be driven as before a whirlwind?

Let these illustrations suggest some appropriate views of the Body, named THE CHURCH. The Church is something more than her officers, her deliberate assemblies, and her canon-laws; something more than even her worship, her ritual, and her standards. From the nature of their occupations, and the tendency of their habits, some minds grow so authoritative and functional, that, when the Church is named, they seem incapable of grasping any other idea than that which embodies office and authority. But there is more in the Church than these; and the Church has another mode of action than that, which she presents in her legislature and her laws. She has INDIVIDUAL and VOLUNTARY action; that action of all her individuals and associations of individuals, for which no REPRESENTATIVE authority is needed, and with which no OFFICIAL power may interfere. In the Church, no more than in the State, is representative action needed for what can be better done without it. The needless interference of the official with the voluntary, does but obstruct the healthful action of the great ecclesiastical body. Even when voluntary action is attended with more or less of agitation, still, within all ordinary limits, this is better, and will work out better life and health to the Body of the Church at large, than a frequent impinging of the official upon the voluntary; the attempt, by the force or the frown of authority, to repress what, in its very nature, is free. Left to its freedom, its agitations, in all ordinary cases, will be slight and temporary; and its activities, a source of vigorous and abiding health.

In our Society, then, there is no irregularity, no incompatibility with our Institutions. Our action is CHURCH action, as really as that of Conventions, of

Vestries, or of Canon-Law. It is a different kind of action; still, truly the action of the Church:—not of the whole Church at once; but of the Church, so far as the action reaches. And it is action, which can be done better without than with, the aid of Church authority; and which, as all observation on the genius of OUR Reformation demonstrates, that authority could not undertake but at the hazard of manifold and solemn perils. And now—let us gather the conclusion of the matter.

This kind of action must be TOLERATED: so long as it is peaceful and respectful of the rights of individuals and of the public, it must be CHEERFULLY—COURTEOUSLY TOLERATED, whether in our association, or in others embodying the same mode of action, though, it may be, actuated by different theological views. This conclusion there is no way of reasonably avoiding, unless we all throw ourselves back on the ground of Infallibility in the Church; and both claim and admit, that in her official capacity, she has the right, and shall have the power, to enforce uniformity of opinion in matters of doctrine and of ceremony, by fagot or by fine, by extension on the rack, or by excommunication from the fold.

To this Infallibility in the Church none of us pretend. The claim to this Infallibility our Church has, for herself, formally and for ever repudiated. Let none, then, invoke the frowns of authority for the purpose of overawing freedom of discussion on points, which the creeds and other standards of the Church leave open. Especially must we agree to tolerate, generously, all proper means of defending and propagating what we and those who differ from us, respectively believe to be the real doctrines of the Church,

'the true Gospel' of Christ. This tolerance belongs to the very genius of our Reformed Protestant Institutions; and without it, there is no way to peace in our ecclesiastical household. The inward moaning of griefs, which may not speak out; the silent struggles and shrinkings of men, who feel that they and their offspring are dying for want of the nutriment of truth, or from the supply of what they regard as error; these are NOT peace. They are unspeakably worse than open, manly, free discussion and defence of what the creeds and standards of the Church leave open to discussion. This, I repeat, is our only way to peace. Our position before the world binds us to this course. Under God, we must commit the Church to the issue of this tolerance, and see,—all fair means being fairly used,—which idea of 'the true Gospel,' will ultimately prevail. This, we doubt not, is the way in which God would have us act. All this wonderfel era of books, of reading, and of inquiry, has not come over the Church without HIM. His hand is in the crisis; He presides over the movement; and we need not fear that He will bring His own Gospel, with whichever side it be identified, safely and triumphantly through the trial; and, in the end, all the purer and more efficient from the trial, to which it is put.

And now, friends and brethren, if these views be satisfactory to your minds; if they convince you that our organization, instead of lying open to fatal objection, stands on lofty and unassailable grounds; and if you believe that with its operation is linked, for weal or woe, all that you hold dear in 'the True Gospel;' then I need have little more to say. Be not moved from your steadfastness in the faith, or from your activity for its perpetuation, by any opposition which

you may encounter, or by any sacrifices to which you may be called. In the opening of my remarks, I dwelt, at sufficient length, on the necessity, which exists, that the true Gospel should continue with you and your children. Than this Gospel, at *all* times, nothing can be more important, unless it be this same heavenly deposit in times like *our own*, when, to multitudes of individuals, it is in danger of being lost; and when its place is likely to be supplied by a system of human additions, which threaten to work a forfeiture of our great inheritance on high.

Our motto is:—"In Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but a new creature:" the "faith, which worketh by love." Against things of acknowledged indifference we raise no capricious opposition. We regard them according to the relation into which they are forced with vital truths. To the divine ordinances of Christ in their purity we are devoted, through all passing changes, and against all opposing influences: and to the simple forms, which our Church has added, we give a consistent and an enduring attachment. But, when even these, and more especially, when others of plainly superstitious tendency, are urged as if they were essentials; or when the observance of them is regarded as effectual and virtually necessary to salvation, then we take our stand with the Apostle, and "give place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the Gospel may continue with you." This Gospel is of more worth than all our other endowments; and yet, with all its worth, it may be lost to each individual, through silent acquiescence in a system of teaching, which takes his hopes from the *rock* and builds them on the *sand*; which, in the great work of our justi-

fication, practically substitutes *ordinances* for *faith*, and *works* for *grace*.

In counteracting this and every other species of religious error, as it seeks to spread among ourselves, it is obvious that such an organization as ours is indispensable. Without it, we are not able either to furnish or to circulate such a supply of pure Christian literature as a reading age and an imperiled Gospel demand. With such an organization, adequately supported, we can furnish, and we can circulate the needed supply. We can put into the hands of our offspring, and of the myriads who will ordinarily come within our influence, a body of Christian literature, which may prove an antidote to the infectious and wide-wasting errors of the age; and which, with the wholesome truths of an unadultered Gospel, may nourish their souls unto eternal life.

In these labors, we move in distinct view of the impressive considerations, that the age in which we live WILL read; that the supply of what is noxious to readers is ABUNDANT; and that it is only by the utmost efficiency and diligence that we can hope to FORESTALL ERROR, and give PERPETUITY TO TRUTH. God grant, that, while such motives stimulate our labors, we yet may act with all teachableness under the Spirit, as well as with all heroism under Christ, knowing that this becomes both the position which we have assumed, and the work, to which we are called. Amen.

APPENDIX.

OFFICERS.

PRESIDENT.

REV. JOHN S. STONE, D. D.

VICE-PRESIDENTS.

Rev. B. C. CUTLER, D. D.	Mr. WM. H. ASPINWALL
" D. MOORE, D. D.	" R. M. BLACKWELL,
" H. SMITH, D. D.	" S. CAMBRELENG,
" H. J. WHITEHOUSE, D. D.	" I. CAROW,
" H. M. BEARE,	" F. DE PEYSTER,
" A. G. MERCER,	" R. W. FOLGER,
" WM. H, NEWMAN,	" W. P. FURNISS,
" JESSE POUND,	" J. PETTIT,
" G. A. SHELTON,	" G. B. RAPELYE,
" J. C. SMITH,	" J. S. SANDFORD,
Hon. L. BRADISH,	" J. SANDS,
" WM. V. BRADY,	" T. TUCKER.

MANAGERS.

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" G. T. BEDELL,	" E. W. DUNHAM,
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" E. HARWOOD,	" T. MESSENGER,
" S. H. TYNG, D. D.	" J. PECK,
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" S. BROWN,	" G. N. TITUS,
" C. BRUSH,	" WM. WHITLOCK, Jr.
" H. E. DAVIES,	" F. S. WINSTON.

TREASURER—F. T. PEET, 172 *Pearl-street.*
RECORDING SECRETARY—WM. K. LOTHROP.
CORRESPONDING SECRETARY—H. ANTHON, D. D.

ADDRESS.

The Board of Managers of the Auxiliary Protestant Episcopal Society in the City of New-York and its Vicinity, for the Promotion of Evangelical Knowledge, respectfully tender to you a copy of its Constitution, together with the Address and Constitution of the Parent Society. They ask for a candid and deliberate examination of these documents, under a firm persuasion of the importance of the object they have in view, and which is sought to be accomplished, with the Divine blessing, and in the confident hope, that if the work be considered without prejudice or prepossessions, it will be helped forward by the fervent prayers and liberal offerings of our fellow Christians. Believing it to be an imperative duty to counteract and expose error, not by rude and uncharitable assaults of men and opinions, but by the manifestation and diffusion of Divine Truth, we have determined, as one of the most effectual means for attaining this end, to employ the press in disseminating the doctrines and principles which every true member of our Church is careful to maintain, as distinctively Evangelical, and Protestant Episcopal. In associating for such a work, it will not answer for an Auxiliary in New-York and its vicinity to come behind others of the same brotherhood in vigorous effort. Our location, as well as the circumstances of the times, will warrant the expectation that a foremost rank will be taken by us in the enterprise, and that our unwearied labors will serve to stir up its friends to godly emulation in every quarter of the country. The aid given by us, to be efficient, must flow in a constant and generous current, supplied, not by temporary and uncertain charities, but by the Annual Contributions of Christian benevolence. It is from Annual Subscribers that we must receive a sufficient and permanent income. It is only by the union of many rills, that we can hope to gaze on a clear and unruffled stream, carrying along with it life and beauty, and fruitfulness to the City of God. Besides aiding the Parent Society from our treasury, it will be necessary in concert with it to establish, as soon as practicable, a Branch Depository in this city; to secure the co-operation of friendly and enterprising publishers; and be prepared to furnish an adequate supply of approved Tracts, Sunday School and other books, setting forth the principles and doctrines of the Gospel embodied in the Articles, Liturgy, and Homilies of the Protestant Episcopal Church. Whilst carrying out these important measures, the Board will always strive to act under the conviction that the general administration and management with which they are charged, (subject to the supervision and direction of the Society itself,) must be conducted both with a strict regard to prudence and economy, and with untiring zeal and fidelity, in order to command the confidence and approbation of the friends of the cause.

To this great and good cause there are strong inducements to believe that very many of our brethren, both of the clergy and laity, are ready (through the instrumentality of this auxiliary) to extend the aid essential to its success. A

crisis they perceive is to be improved which will never return; and if it be suffered to pass unimproved, it will leave Evangelical Churchmen without an excuse for the apathy and sluggishness which have folded the hands to sleep. Divine truth must be maintained and propagated in its purity, integrity, and simplicity, or we shall look in vain for *those fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.* Recognising in the PRESS the most efficient auxiliary of the PULPIT for the ingathering of such an harvest, and having before us daily evidence of its power to scatter the *blighted* with the *good* seed, we cannot but know and feel the necessity of immediate and persevering effort to refresh and fertilize the vast field which surrounds us on every side. The signs of the times summon us to the prosecution of this work with trustful hearts and liberal hands. Let us undertake it in humble reliance on the strength and guidance of Him, of whose only gift it cometh that His faithful people do unto Him true and laudable service. Let each one, according to his several ability, bring his offering to its treasury, and above all, let no friend of it fail to present to the Great Head of the Church his fervent supplications, that He would send down upon our labors the healthful spirit of His grace, and pour upon them the continued dew of His blessing, so that they may result in His glory and the eternal good of the souls of men.

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

AUXILIARY PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL SOCIETY

In the City of New-York and its Vicinity,

FOR THE

PROMOTION OF EVANGELICAL KNOWLEDGE.

ART. I. This Society shall be denominated the Auxiliary Protestant Episcopal Society in the City of New-York and its Vicinity, for the Promotion of Evangelical Knowledge.

ART. II. The object of this Society is to aid, by the contribution of funds, and otherwise, the Protestant Episcopal Society for the Promotion of Evangelical Knowledge, in the accomplishment of its objects, as set forth in the Constitution of that Society, and upon the principles and with the views declared by it.

ART. III. Any person approving the objects of this Society, may become a

member thereof by the annual contribution to its funds of one dollar ; and any person paying fifty dollars at one time shall be a member for life.

ART. IV. The officers of this Society shall be a President, Vice-Presidents, a Recording Secretary, a Corresponding Secretary, a Treasurer, and a Board of Managers, consisting of twenty members, who shall be elected annually, and shall hold their offices respectively for one year, and until others shall be chosen in their places. The Secretaries and the Treasurer of the Society for the time being, shall be *ex-officio* members of the Board of Managers.

ART. V. There shall be an Annual Meeting of the Society on the first Monday of February, in each and every year, at which a general election of officers shall take place. If a vacancy shall occur in any of the offices, it may be filled by the Board of Managers ; and the person so elected to fill a vacancy, shall hold his office for the unexpired term of his immediate predecessor in office, and until another shall be chosen in his place. Other meetings of the Society shall, on the recommendation of the Board of Managers, be called by the President, or, in his absence, by one of the Vice-Presidents of the Society.

ART. VI. At the Annual Meeting of the Society, the Treasurer and Board of Managers shall present full reports in writing from their respective departments, when a Committee of three members shall be appointed by the presiding officer to audit the Treasurer's accounts. All monies shall be drawn from the treasury on the warrant or by the authority of the Board of Managers.

ART. VII. The Board of Managers shall be charged with the general administration and management of the affairs of the Society, subject, however, at all times to the supervision and general direction of the Society itself. They shall meet for the transaction of business at such times and places as they shall determine ; and shall have the power to elect their own officers and appoint their agents.

ART. VIII. At all meetings of the Society ten members shall be a quorum for the transaction of business, and at all the meetings of the Board of Managers five members shall constitute such quorum.

ART. IX. All meetings of the Society and of the Board of Managers shall be opened with prayer.

ART. X. This Constitution shall not be altered, except at the annual meeting of the Society, and by a vote of two-thirds of the members present.

PARENT SOCIETY.

ADDRESS

OF THE

PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL SOCIETY

For the Promotion of Evangelical Knowledge.

A Society, with above name, having been organised during the present session of the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in these United States, by several of the bishops, clergy and laity of said Church, it becomes a matter of obvious propriety that they should submit to their brethren and friends the views by which they have been governed in their work. They invite your attention,

I.—First, to the Right to Organise.

The Association which we have formed involves action on the voluntary principle. On this point we enter into no argument. We have acted on the already recognised right thus to organize. The right, among Episcopalians, to hold differing opinions—within the limits of orthodoxy in the faith, and of loyalty to the Church—carries with it the right to maintain these opinions, and to associate for their maintenance. Several of the most important of our religious societies are organized on the voluntary principle.* We assert for ourselves the right to organize on the same base. Permit us now to detain you for a few moments upon

II.—Second, The Reasons for Organization.

These have a relation to the object of our association; and this object leads us to the use of the press. Our reasons, then, for organizing for the religious use of the press are resolvable into two. We organize

*The General S. S. Union, the New-York Tract Society, and the various Bible, Tract and Homily Societies are voluntary institutions.

1. First, because error is spreading through our Church.

It is not necessary, at this point, to enter into particulars. Unhappily, we shall too well understood by the mero allusion. We will, therefore, but say, in the general, that we refer to errors against which our judgments and our consciences constrain us to bear a solemn and most earnest testimony; errors touching both doctrine and the Church; both the way and the means of salvation.

With us the question is,—not whether men may not hold important truths in connection with theso errors,—but whether these errors, spreading with the lapse of ages, and moulding the mind of successive generations, do not put saving truth moro and more out of sight, till finally they leave countless multitudes without that whereby the Holy Spirit renews and sanctifies us in Christ Jesus; and whether, if operating without an antidote, they have not a present and immediate tendency to jeopard the salvation of the soul? This is the question which we have to consider; and our consideration obliges us to answer it in a way, which, in our judgment, renders some such organization as the present imperative. As we havo "learned Christ," we hold these errors to be dangerously corrupting to a pure gospel and a pure Church, and deeply perilous to "a good hope through grace." We cannot, for an hour, give place to the plea that they aro errors in words more than in things. In our best judgments, they affect the vital parts of the religion of Christ. We organize

2. Second, because without organization, we are, and must be, instrumental in the propagation of these errors.

By our involuntary influence, by the implied sanction of our names, and by the indirect contribution of our means, we are, under our ordinary modes of action, constrained to aid in disseminating views, against which our consciences have solemnly bound us to testify. At present, the stream of error, far too inadequately opposed, runs through every portion of our Church. Except to a limited extent, we cannot check its flow. With a power, which at present it is difficult to resist, the press among us is subsidiary to the spread of a most perilous infection: and by our silence and want of organization, we label the poison as "Good Medicine" for our families and our parishes. Except when its character is already known, we cannot buy a book for the family till we havo read it; nor purchase a dozen for a Sunday School library till we have studied perhaps fifty. We must have an organization for publishing, selecting, and sanctioning such books and tracts as we approve, and for furnishing them to our families and our parishes through our own recognized depositories, and under our own recognized imprint. By these means we may most reasonably hope to prevent the silent and gradual disappearance of evangelical views from the Church to which we belong, and which we have been taught to love. Without these means, we labor against most formidable disadvantages. We favor a silence, in which error yields most certainly and most abundantly its hundred-fold fruits. We must have an organization, around which we can rally under the standard of our Church, and in whose name we can promote what we hold to be the unadulterated Gospel of Christ. We proceed now to exhibit,

III.—Third, The Principles of the Organization.

Our Society is based on the maxim, that the press, in the hands of a truly

faithful ministry, and of an intelligently pious laity, is one of the mightiest weapons for the maintenance and defence of truth. With this, mainly, must the power of a corrupt press, in the hands of the various ministries of evil, be met and broken. The importance of a pure and healthful Christian literature to the purity and healthfulness of religion and of the Church, cannot easily be over-stated. The principles, then, which, through the press, we seek to disseminate, are,

1. First, as to DOCTRINE, distinctly EVANGELICAL.

We use the term in its well understood sense, as indicating the leading and fundamental doctrines of the glorious Reformation. Our system of doctrine will readily be recognized by a statement of a few of its particulars.

Scripture, the sole rule of faith; not Scripture and tradition its joint rule: *Man*, an utterly lost and helpless sinner; and *Christ*, a most free and sufficient Saviour: *Pardon*, the direct gift of Christ to every one that "believeth with the heart;" with no intervention other than that needed to bring him to faith; not dependent on a priestly or any human intervention for the forgiveness of sin: *Justification*, a gracious act of God, received by faith without works; not an inward character in man, consisting of faith as one of a catalogue of justifying graces: *Renovation*, the work of the Holy Spirit in the regeneration of man, operating mainly through the Truth, and making us "new creatures" in Christ: *Sanctification*, distinguished from justification, as the fruit from the seed; not blended with justification as making therewith one whole of inherent righteousness.

2. Second, as to the *Church*, our principles are distinctively PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL.

Here, also, the system which we adopt, will be easily distinguished by a few of its features.

The Church, "the blessed company of all faithful people:" *Episcopacy*, as having existed "from the apostles' times:" the *Sacraments*, divine signs and seals, pledges and means of grace to faith; not standing miracles, whereby Christ is made incarnate in His members: *Jesus*, the immediate High Priest and sole Intercessor in behalf of every individual believer; not approached through the necessary medium of any ministerial intervention: *Worship*, according to our Liturgy, simple and Scriptural; not loaded with human inventions and unauthorized ceremonies.

Such, brethren and friends, are the reasons for our organization, and the principles on which we are organized. Without entering into further detail, or into any labored appeal, we conclude by saying frankly, that, among those who co-operate with us, we do not expect perfect identity of opinion. Our invitation is to all, and only those, who, for *substance* of faith and practice, agree in the stand which we have here taken. We seek the sympathy, the prayers, the co-operation of all, and only those, who feel bound of God in their consciences to perpetuate the truly Evangelical faith, and the really Protestant character of the Church of our fathers. We would apply the principle of a freely acting spiritual affinity;—one of the main principles in the hands of God for keeping alive in the world true faith, love and holiness. Surround us, then, in our sacred association, with the living atmosphere of your prayers; strengthen us, in our arduous work, by the willing contribution of your means; and thus, for the sake of Him who hath our vows, aid us to keep burning on earth, and to spread, brightening through the world, the lights of a pure faith in a purified Church.

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL SOCIETY

FOR THE

Promotion of Evangelical Knowledge.

ART. I. This Society shall be denominated the Protestant Episcopal Society for the Promotion of Evangelical Knowledge.

ART. II. The object of this Society shall be, to maintain and set forth the principles and doctrines of the Gospel embodied in the Articles, Liturgy, and Homilies of the Protestant Episcopal Church, by the publication of Tracts, Sunday School and other books.

ART. III. Any person approving the objects of this Society may become a member of the same by the annual contribution of one dollar. Any person by paying fifty dollars at one time, shall be a member for life.

ART. IV. This Society shall meet triennially at the time and place of the meeting of the General Convention, and shall, at each triennial meeting, elect a President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, and a Board of Directors, and also transact such other business as may be brought before it. At every triennial meeting the transactions of the preceding three years shall be reported.

ART. V. The Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, who may signify their approval of the objects of this Society, shall be *ex-officio* Vice-Presidents of the same, and members of the Board of Directors.

ART. VI. The Board of Directors shall meet annually, at such time and place as themselves shall appoint, and elect an Executive Committee, which shall consist of four clerical and four lay members, upon which Committee shall devolve all the powers of the Board during its recess. The Board shall enact By-Laws, and twelve members, at any meeting regularly convened, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

ART. VII. Any association formed on the principles of this Society, and annually contributing to its treasury, shall be considered an auxiliary; and the President and Secretary, for the time being, of such auxiliary, shall be *ex-officio* members of the Board of Directors.

ART. VIII. All meetings of the Board of Directors, and of the Executive Committee, shall be opened with prayer.

ART. IX. This Constitution shall not be altered except at a triennial meeting, and by a vote of two-thirds of the members present.

PRESIDENT.

RIGHT REV. WILLIAM MEADE, D. D.

VICE-PRESIDENTS.

See Article V. of Constitution.

SECRETARY.

REV. WILLIAM SUDDARDS, *Philadelphia.*

TREASURER.

JOHN L. GODDARD, *Philadelphia.*